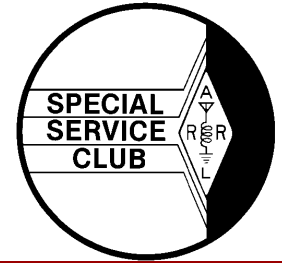




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# QSO'ER



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## **Tate, Cops sworn in as FCC members**

Volume 19, Issue 1

January 2006

Republican Deborah T. Tate and Democrat Michael J. Cops were sworn in January 3 by FCC Chairman Kevin J. Martin as members of the FCC.

Tate will complete the term of former FCC Chairman Michael K. Powell, who departed the Commission last March. That term ends June 30, 2007.

Cops, an FCC member since 2001, is beginning a second term that will run through June 30, 2010.

Before joining the FCC, Tate was a director of the Tennessee Regulatory Authority, which she chaired in 2003 and 2004. Earlier in her career, Tate was an attorney and senior policy advisor to former Tennessee governors Lamar Alexander and Don Sundquist.

Prior to his FCC service, Cops was assistant secretary of commerce for trade development at the US Department of Commerce. He previously was on the staff of US Sen Ernest "Fritz" Hollings (D-SC) and served for more than a dozen years as chief of staff.

To round out the five-member FCC, the White House still must fill the vacancy left by former Commissioner Kathleen Q. Abernathy, a Republican, who stepped down December 9.

### **FCARC Officers**

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## Ham Tips

*By: Sam Fields, KC9GVM*

Be sure the frequency (or "channel") is "clear" before you transmit. Think how you would like it if someone interrupted your conversation.

Recommendation: when you turn to a repeater or a simplex frequency, listen for at least thirty seconds before transmitting.

Using Q-signals too often is bad form. Although Q-signals have a very valuable place in Amateur Radio, they are not universally accepted on F.M. voice channels. Using them during EVERY TRANSMISSION is really annoying.

Recommendation: use Q-signals sparingly. Once in a while. Not very often.

Using the phrase "clear and monitoring" is not really necessary. Neither term is required by the F.C.C. or anybody else. If you call another amateur, using his/her callsign and yours, and that person does not answer, it is not necessary to advise "clear." You have already identified your station and any other identification is superfluous.

Recommendation: use "clear" only to mean that you are shutting down operation and will not be there to answer any subsequent calls. Under normal circumstances, when you are finished with a contact but will continue listening, it is sufficient (and just right!) to merely say your call sign.

Contrasting Recommendation: If you attempt to contact someone and there is no answer, you can notify others that you are finished by saying, "KF6xxx clear," or "no contact, this is KF6xxx clear W6ABC repeater." This allows someone who may have been standing by to go ahead and make his or her call.

Be sure to learn the usage, protocol and/or policies of repeaters you are using. Just because a repeater is "there" does not mean that you are welcome to switch to it and use it for long, extended rag-chews. Some repeaters welcome newcomers, some do not. A sensible person does not want to spend time where s/he is not welcome. Even though your license allows you to operate on any frequency within the bounds of your license class, a wise amateur avoids "closed" repeaters and repeaters that are operated by small, unfriendly groups.

Recommendation: listen to a repeater for a while before you make a decision to use it. You might even ask someone on the repeater if you are welcome to use it for occasional conversations.

Using the term "for I.D." is not necessary. There should be no reason to transmit your call sign other than to identify your station. Identification is required every 10 minutes during a conversation and at the end of a conversation or series of communications. Conversations need not come to a halt while you identify. ("Stand by, everyone, while I say my call sign.") Simply say your call sign once within 10 minutes.

Recommendation: while talking, say your call sign once every ten minutes. Don't say "For I.D., this is KF6xxx." Don't say "For license preservation purposes, this is KF6xxx" more than once or twice per year. Identify properly, but do not over-identify.

Contrasting Recommendation: if you hear someone say "for I.D.," they may be trying to gently remind you that 10 minutes have passed and you should identify your station. Take the hint and say your call sign the next time it is your turn to talk.

*Continued on Page 8*

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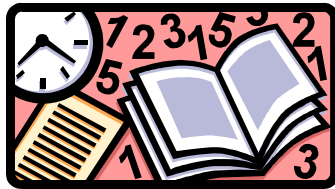
# VE Testing Dates

Interested in Amateur (HAM) Radio? Need to upgrade your license? The FCARC can help you with both of these.

With the exception of the November test date, all testing is done at the Red Cross Building at 1302 E. Wisconsin Ave. in Appleton. Test check in is from 8:00 am until 8:30 am. The cost is \$14.00.

Here are the dates for 2006:

February 4th, April 15th, June 10th, August 12th, November 5th.



# New Members

Join me in welcoming the following new member (s) to the club!

- Kate—KB0DKD
- Gene—K0TIW
- Steve—KC9IKU
- Jerome—KF6MYE
- Bill—KC9IPU

## Wednesday 2 Meter Net

### Net Control Operator schedule

Jan 18	Tim	KC9FSH
Jan 25	Guest Operator	
Feb 1	Bernie	N9YMC
Feb 8	Tony	AB9IO
Feb 15	Eric	KG8RF
Feb 22	Tim	KC9FSH
March 1	Guest Operator	
March 8	Bernie	N9YMC
March 15	Tony	AB9IO
March 22	Eric	KG8RF
March 29	Tim	KC9FSH

## For Sale

4– 10' sections of Rohn 45 Tower.

Call Karen WB9ZNA  
@ {920} 725-7374

Fox Cities Amateur Radio Club (W9ZL) invites everyone to tune in on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 PM on 146.76/R 100hz PL to hear the *Newsline* broadcast.

Then stick around to check into the net immediately afterwards. This is an open forum net and anything can be discussed, including; technical questions, equipment review and for swap and for sale items.

## •Upcoming Events

- Mon. January 16 FCARC Monthly Club Meeting at the Goodwill Comm. Center
- Sat. January 21 Club kit build with Andy, N1KSN at Fox Valley Technical College
- Mon. January 23 Exec Board Meeting at Goodwill Comm. Center
- Sat. February 4 VE Testing at the Red Cross Building
- Sun. February 19 Annual Club Awards Banquet at the Darboy Club. RSVP REQ'D
- Mon. February 20 FCARC Monthly Club Meeting at the Goodwill Comm. Center
- Mon. February 27 Exec Board Meeting at Goodwill Comm. Center

## Membership Renewals Reminders

As a reminder only—following is a list of the membership renewals coming up this month and the following 2 months. If you have already renewed—thank you. If not, you can renew with Karen (KC9BMH) at the next club meeting.

N9JHB	1/1/2006
WA6UWY	1/1/2006
ND0L	1/1/2006
KB9LRD	1/1/2006
N0ZKC	1/1/2006
KC9BMH	1/1/2006
KA9LAR	1/1/2006
K9RFI	1/1/2006
KB9WPH	2/1/2006
KB9IME	2/1/2006
AB9IO	2/1/2006
KB2WUN	2/1/2006
ND9DW	2/1/2006
K9JEN	2/1/2006

## Concretes By Magel



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For more information contact Brian Long (KB9LRD) at 730-8485

## Elmer's Contact List

This is a listing of HAMS who are willing to help other HAMS out in special areas. Feel free to contact these fellow HAMS with any questions:

Call / Name	Specialty Area	Phone #
N1KSN- Andy	CW	720-0617
W9ZC- Bob	Tech. Code	725-7974
N9OEQ- Chuck	HF & VHF Digital Modes	788-5497
N9TNW—Bill	HF & Satellite	739-6827
N9LVS—Dan	FCC Personal Data Changes	205-4899

Have something Ham related to sell? If so, contact Bernie (N9YMC) at [n9ymc@arrl.net](mailto:n9ymc@arrl.net) to arrange for it's insertion in the next issue of this newsletter. We will run it in the newsletter and on-line at [www.fcarc.us](http://www.fcarc.us)

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## •Do you 222?

*By: Eric Bjorkquist*

In our wonderful hobby of ham radio there is a lot of discussion about the different things that threaten our operation. There's Broadband over Power lines (BPL), Government intrusion, corporate intrusion and even lack of interest in certain modes or frequencies. Well the last one got me thinking of a band that not many people in the Fox Valley area are using. That band is the 1.25 meter or 222 MHz band.

When you are a newly licensed ham what is usually one of the first radios you buy? 9 times out of 10 it's probably some sort of 2 meter or 70 cm single/dual band rig. When a club decides to put up its first repeater it's usually what? That's right, a 2 meter or 70 cm machine. There is usually no thought given to setting up a 1.25 meter station.

There are many excuses for this. The two most popular ones are the lack of interest in the band and lack of equipment. These two excuses go hand-in-hand and some of it has to do with the economics of manufacturing these types of rigs.

1.25 meters is only available to hams in ITU region 2 (the Americas) while the rest of the world don't. This is why you see very little equipment from the major manufacturers for this band. The costs involved are too much for what the manufacturers will get back in sales and profit. Since most hams in all 3 of the ITU regions have access to 2 meters or 70 cm, it makes more business sense to manufacture radios for those bands.

That doesn't mean there are no radios out there for the band. There are a few companies still making 222 MHz radios. Alinco has both a single band portable handy talkie, DJ-296T, and a mobile rig, DR-235T. Both of which are reasonably priced and get decent reviews from eham.com. There are also multi-band handhelds available such as the Yaesu VX-7 (covers 50, 144, 222, 440 MHz), VX-6 (144, 222, 440 MHz) and the Kenwood TH-F6A (144, 222, 440 MHz). Another option is to purchase a 222 MHz transverter to use with your HF rig to get all mode operation on the band. Downeast Microwave and SSB electronics USA are 2 manufacturers that come to mind for transverters. You can also find used equipment for 222 on eBay and various other ham radio classifieds.

Now I know what you're thinking. Great Eric, I got my 222 rig now what? We don't have repeater in the area to talk on or monitor. What frequencies should I monitor? Well a lot of hams in the Fox Valley are unaware that we have 2 repeaters. The first one in Appleton is the 224.220 MHz machine (No PL, -1.60 offset). It's an uncoordinated machine which means its frequency pair is not registered with W.A.R. (Wisconsin Association of Repeaters) and would have to shut down if it interferes with a coordinated radio on the same frequencies. The other is in Oshkosh on 223.900 MHz (PL 107.2, -1.60 offset). Both repeaters can be keyed up with an HT depending on your location. Another option is you can monitor the National Simplex calling frequency at 223.500 MHz. or designate a simplex frequency of your own based on your favorite mode (FM, SSB, CW etc). As a reminder, be sure to follow the national band plans when doing so to help prevent interference.

Still not convinced to try 222? Well you should try to get on a few times per year. If interest in the band continues to decline we could see ourselves losing the band entirely. Many commercial

---

## Do you 222? -Cont'd

By: Eric Bjorkquist

interests need frequencies and the FCC would be happy to auction off those frequencies to improve their own cash flow. We've already lost 220 to 222 MHz to commercial interests so it wouldn't take much to lose the rest if we don't get involved and operate on the band.

Another benefit of the band is propagation. 1.25 meters offers the best of both 2 meters and 70 cm operations since it is right in the middle of both bands. With 1.25 meters you get almost the same signal distance of travel as with 2 meters with fewer multi-paths. On the other hand the wavelength of 1.25 meters closely resembles 70 cm so it has the same building penetration capabilities and low noise characteristics of that band.

With the overcrowding of frequencies in some areas, 222 MHz is a great band to get on if you want to get away from the busy 2 meter / 70 cm bands. More and more frequencies in those bands are being used and it's getting difficult in some areas to operate without a little QRM. 222 MHz is a great place if you have a group of friends looking for a frequency or repeater to hang out on that's a little more private and quiet.

Well what do you think? Is this enough to convince you to try 222 MHz? At future FCARC meetings I will propose and see if there is enough interested to begin getting a small group together of those interested in 222 MHz. Maybe we can set a local club frequency on the band and look into doing some 222 MHz projects (Antennas, Kits, etc.). Until then, 73, and I look forward to seeing you on 222.

ARRL 1.25 meters Band Plan	
222.0-222.15	Weak-signal modes
222.0-222.025	EME
222.05-222.06	Propagation beacons
222.1	SSB & CW calling frequency
222.10-222.15	Weak-signal CW & SSB
222.15-222.25	Local coordinator's option; weak signal, ACSB, repeater inputs, control
222.25-223.38	FM repeater inputs only
223.40-223.52	FM simplex
223.52-223.64	Digital, packet
223.64-223.70	Links, control
223.71-223.85	Local coordinator's option; FM simplex, packet, repeater outputs
223.85-224.98	Repeater outputs only

## . Ham Tips –Cont'd

Long ago, F.C.C. rules required mobile hams to not only say their call sign, but to say where they were operating, giving both the city and the call sign area. You may hear some hams saying, "...mobile 6" or "...mobile 3" after their call sign. This means that they are operating "mobile, in call sign area 6" or "mobile, in call sign area 3." This is no longer required but it is sometimes good to know. When leaving their home state, some hams will keep track of what call sign area they are in, and say, "...mobile 7," or "...mobile 1," or whatever.

Recommendation: it's not necessary, but it's not wrong.

Certain types of jargon are easily recognizable as being "CB" terms. "What is your personal?" when you mean "what is your name?" "I'm on the side," when you mean you are "listening" or "monitoring." Although there is nothing "wrong" with CB, these terms are neither generally used nor appreciated on Amateur Radio frequencies.

Recommendation: avoid CB-style jargon and terms. Generally speaking, plain English is better: "my name is xxxx, what is yours?"

Different repeaters handle emergency communications in different ways. A general guideline is this: if you are on an unfamiliar repeater and you have emergency traffic, say so! Example: "Can someone help me contact the Highway Patrol?" or "I need help contacting the Fire Department." Asking "is anybody monitoring?" may sound like an attempt to start a casual conversation. On many repeaters, you could be ignored. However, if you state that you have emergency traffic, people on many repeaters will drop what they are doing to help you. Note: if you are monitoring a repeater and someone asks for emergency assistance and you cannot help, BE SILENT! There are few things stupider than someone breaking in to say that they would help except that they forgot the codes, or that they left their radio with the Touch-Tone (tm) pad at home, or that their home phone is busy so they can't make the call for you.

Recommendations:

If you have emergency traffic, say so immediately.

If you can help, please do.

If you cannot help, do not transmit.

In this day of scanners, scanning mobile radios, scanning portable radios, dual-, triple- and quadruple-band radios and multiple radios in the car or shack, you could miss making contact with someone because your radio is scanning several channels or bands. If you know that the person you are calling is sitting next to the radio waiting for you, you can make your call very simple: say his/her call, then your own. However, if your friend has a scanning radio or listens to several radios, it is possible that he/she could miss your call. You should call twice: say the other station's call twice, then your own. Pause for a half-minute or so and try again. It might also be a good idea to try again in 4 or 5 minutes, in case the called person's scanner was stopping on a long, drawn-out conversation. And if you know that the called station is listening to more than one frequency, you can call and say "on [such-and-such] repeater" to give them a hint as to which microphone to pick up or which band to select.

Recommendation: call twice.

You may hear people using the term "73," meaning "best wishes." There is no "s" in the salutation "73." (Other hams may use the term "88," meaning "love and kisses." Typically used between husbands and wives.) These shortcuts were developed years ago as a way to communicate common thoughts quickly. You will hear others saying "73s" and "88s" (wrong!) You might even hear someone saying [cringe!] "threes and eights and all those good numbers!" Yecch! Negative!

*Continued on Page 9*



## . Ham Tips –Cont'd

Proper usage would be similar to this:

Voice: "OK, Dan, seven-three and I will talk to you later. (pause) WA7AIL."

Voice: "73 for now, WB6KHP clear."

CW: "W2EOS de K8JW CUL OM 73 SK."

CW: "N6xxx de KB6xxx 73 88 SK."

There is no specific requirement for keeping logs of the use of your amateur radio station except for International Third-party Traffic. However, a good way to keep track of your communications is to use a Log Book, available at some amateur radio dealers.

One method is this: make an entry in the "date" column for each day you operate your station. Each time you contact a "new" station, make entries for call sign, name, frequency, mode and any other information you think necessary or interesting. You probably have no need to make log entries for people you talk to every day, with the possible exception of logging emergency traffic that you may handle for others.

Sometimes while talking to another station, it is necessary to ask the other person to "stand by." This may be caused by (a) a driving situation needing immediate attention to avert a crash, (b) a spouse or child walking into the "shack" with a message, (c) placing your order at a drive-up window, etc. The proper response, when requested to "stand by," is silence. Generally it will only take a moment and the other station will be back. If you feel it necessary to say something, then say, "[call sign] standing by." If you respond to "stand by" with a long, drawn-out acknowledgement, it serves no purpose and the person asking you to "stand by" is not listening anyway.

Keep in mind that when you are operating in a noisy environment, you do not have to be able to hear yourself talking. There will be those instances where you are helping with emergency communications for a disaster, or communications support for a parade, or you are at an airport or other noisy place. If you shout into the microphone loud enough to hear yourself, you are distorting the signal so badly that the person on the other end may not be able to hear or understand you. Instead, practice speaking into the microphone in a normal tone. It can be very difficult to operate under these conditions (loud background noise), but it is a skill that you would do well to learn.

One of the most important things for new hams to learn is to "K-H-T." That is "key, hesitate, talk." You must consciously learn to push the microphone button, pause slightly, and then begin speaking. If you push the button and speak simultaneously, the first word or the first part of a word may be cut off. This does not facilitate effective communications. Hopefully, if you learn to do it correctly from the first day, it will become subconscious and you will do it automatically. If this is the case, you will earn the respect and admiration of your peers. If not, you will be forever labeled as a sub-standard operator.

Try to keep your language polite. Profanity and discussions of bodily functions should be off limits - not because of government rules, but because it's the right thing to do. Generally, other hams and their family members do not want to hear conversations that are not of the "G-rated" variety.